

REMARKS

In response to the Office Action mailed March 11, 2004, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration. To further the prosecution of this Application, Applicants submit the following remarks and have canceled claims. The claims as now presented are believed to be in allowable condition.

Claims 1-15 and 31-42 were pending in this Application. By this Amendment, claims 31 and 34 have been canceled. Accordingly, claims 1-15, 32-33 and 35-42 are now pending in this Application. Claims 1, 12 and 37 are independent claims.

Drawings

Applicants have taken note that the proposed correction to the drawings, which was mailed on January 8, 2004, has been accepted by the Examiner. Applicants will provide formal drawings in due course and no later than with payment of any issue fee.

Allowed ClaimsClaims 37-42

Claims 37-42 have been allowed.

Claims 1-11 and 31-33

Claims 31-33 were objected to as being dependent on a rejected base claim but were deemed allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Rather than rewrite claim 31 to include all of the limitations of claim 1 from which claim 31 depends, Applicants have rewritten claim 1 to include all of the limitations of claim 31 and canceled claim 31. Accordingly, claim 1 is now in allowable condition.

Because claims 2-11 and 32-33 depend from claim 1, claims 2-11 and 32-33 are in allowable condition for at least the same reasons.

Claims 12-15 and 34-36

Claims 34-36 were objected to as being dependent on a rejected base claim but were deemed allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Rather than rewrite claim 34 to include all of the limitations of claim 12 from which claim 34 depends, Applicants have rewritten claim 12 to include all of the limitations of claim 34 and canceled claim 34. Accordingly, claim 12 is now in allowable condition.

Because claims 13-15 and 35-36 depend from claim 12, claims 13-15 and 35-36 are in allowable condition for at least the same reasons. Applicants wish to point out that minor clarifying amendments were made to claims 12 and 13 for consistency when incorporating the limitations of claim 34 into claim 12.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing remarks, this Application should be in condition for allowance. A Notice to this affect is respectfully requested. If the Examiner believes, after this Amendment, that the Application is not in condition for allowance, the Examiner is respectfully requested to call the Applicants' Representative at the number below.

Applicants hereby petition for any extension of time which is required to maintain the pendency of this case. If there is a fee occasioned by this Amendment, including an extension fee, that is not covered by an enclosed check, please charge any deficiency to Deposit Account No. 50-0901.

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If the enclosed papers or fees are considered incomplete, the Patent Office is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned collect at (508) 366-9600, in Westborough, Massachusetts.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. E. Huang', is written over a horizontal line.

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